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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6592
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0258
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 0083
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1330
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS 0072
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 0561
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0925
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 1855
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 002825

SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/RSP, G/TIP, DRL/PHD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/04/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [ELAB](#) [SMIG](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: MIGRANT WORKER INCIDENT SPARKS ANOTHER DUST-UP
BETWEEN INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA

REF: A. JAKARTA 2627

[1](#)B. JAKARTA 2641

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b,d).

[1](#)1. (U) This cable was coordinated with Embassy Kuala Lumpur.

[1](#)2. (C) SUMMARY. The alleged gang rape of an Indonesian national working in Malaysia has outraged Indonesians. Police have detained 10 of the suspects--including a police officer--and the victim is now being sheltered by Indonesian consular authorities. The GOI is examining possible legal avenues and a migrant protection NGO said it is reporting the incident to the UN. The incident is the latest dust-up over migrants to afflict Indonesian-Malaysian relations. END SUMMARY.

LATEST INCIDENT

[1](#)3. (SBU) Another Indonesian migrant worker has allegedly fallen victim to violence in Malaysia. The story is a bit complex, but Ria Susanti, 21, had fled her job of three months at an abusive Malaysian household in Klang near Kuala Lumpur in early 2007. She then married another migrant worker, Muhamad Mujib, according to Wahid Susilo of the Indonesian organization Migrant Care. Per press reports which Susilo said are correct, on September 7, two men came to the couple's home in Petaling Jaya, near Kuala Lumpur, and identified themselves as police. When Mujib asked for an ID, the men allegedly beat him and robbed the couple. They then abducted Ria, who was two months pregnant. Ria was transported 150 kilometers to a hotel in Muar, Johor, where 12 men beat and raped her repeatedly, before selling her on September 8 for RM400 (about USD 110) to three other men, who raped her in an empty warehouse.

GOI EXAMINES LEGAL AVENUES

[1](#)4. (SBU) After the attack, Ria managed to escape and was reunited with her husband. Ria is now sheltered at the Indonesian Consulate in Johor while the embassy considers the type of legal action to take, according to Setyo Wasisto, a police officer assigned to the Indonesian Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. Setyo told AmEmbassy Kuala Lumpur poloff that Muar police had detained 10 of the 12 men for questioning. The men included a low-ranking Malaysian police officer. Johor Consul Trimardjono Didik told Indonesian reporters on October 3 that consulate staff are accompanying Ria to the Petaling

Jaya police station to assist in the case.

15. (SBU) Didik said on Indonesian radio that the alleged rape was shocking, while also commending the initial response by the Malaysian police to the crime. Warning fellow Indonesians that the situation in Malaysia was "not adequately safe" for foreigners, he said Malaysian police, persons claiming to be police, and private militia authorized to detain illegal immigrants (Rela) often abuse Indonesian citizens.

HITTING AN INDONESIAN NERVE

16. (C) Like other cases of alleged brutality against Indonesian migrants that preceded Ria's (see reftels), this case has received prominent attention in Indonesia. Susilo told poloff that Migrant Care is preparing to report the case to the UN Human Rights Council. Wiwiek Setyawati, Director of the foreign ministry's Department of Human Rights, told the media that she welcomes Migrant Care's taking this case to the UN. Two parliamentarians publicly called for the GOI to protest Ria's treatment. The case is being covered daily by Indonesian media.

17. (C) Susilo said Migrant Care has documented several cases of abuse of Indonesian migrants by Rela volunteers, including that of 20-year-old Suriyani Nas, who alleged that in April she was bound, gagged and raped for a month by a Rela member.

She was rescued, turned over to police, held in an immigration detention camp and eventually released after intervention by Indonesian embassy officials. Pregnant, Suriyani is now at the embassy shelter in Kuala Lumpur and will be sent home soon. Malaysian authorities have not

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pursued the allegations, Susilo told poloff.

ANOTHER COMPLICATION TO RELATIONS

18. (C) The Ria incident is the latest dust-up over migrants to afflict Indonesian-Malaysian relations. In recent discussions in Jakarta focused on ties between the two countries, the treatment of migrant workers netted much of the spotlight. It is positive that the Malaysian authorities seem to be actively investigating the incident, an investigation which--if sustained--should help reduce the temperatures in Indonesia a bit.

HEFFERN